

Abstract

A reticle sorter and a semiconductor fabrication facility employing one or more reticle sorters is provided. The reticle sorter(s) generally lies between a reticle storage system and a group of one or more photolithography exposure tools (e.g., steppers) and is configured for sorting reticles in one or more cassettes. The use of the reticle sorter provides sorting functionality apart from the reticle storage system and typically closer to the group of photolithography steppers with which it is associated. This can, for example, significantly increase the throughput of semiconductor wafers through the associated photolithography exposure tools as well as in the semiconductor fabrication plant as a whole.

00383508-000000

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.10:"Express Mail" mailing label number: ELO39320164415Date of Deposit: June 30, 1998

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